

•

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

SEARCHLIGHT

THE SAVIOUR

ETC., ETC.

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ONE TRUTH ONE PEOPLE



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HIS HOLINESS
RAJJI MAHARAJ

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PREFACE

It is unfortunate indeed that the multitude of people steer clear of Religion—the system of Truths—and look upon it with a sense of prejudice and disaffection, as a positive impediment to the attainment of world peace, harmony and prosperity, on account of its past dark history and the present ugly form it has been given by the selfish, unscrupulous and mercenary priestcraft. Religion, which has God for its author, Truth for its practice and Salvation for its goal, is an essential and indispensable element in man's being and his daily life. It regulates human conduct and makes life a discipline of morality and righteousness. It is the flower of man's culture and civilisation. It is the most unfailing arrangement for man's quality and character. There can be no real living without it.

True Religion is a telescope that reveals to man the most delightful visions and amazing glories of the spiritual world. It is a golden tie that binds man to the Supreme Father and holds him to His Throne. It is unifying and harmonising. It is integrating and universal. In it lies the well-being and happiness of individuals and the security and prosperity of nations. The lovers of peace and the benefactors of humanity should, therefore, turn their

attention to the indomitable strength and exhaustless potentialities of Religion—the ‘Cure-all’ of all contagions of disharmony, conflict and strife, the one thing needful for putting an end to the reign of impiety, discord and disharmony and for introducing an era of piety, peace and harmony.

The author has, in the following pages, tried to deal with Religion in general and its practical aspect, and if his humble attempt proves thought-provoking even to a few serious aspirants, his labour will be more than compensated, his aim more than realised and his heart-cherished desire more than fulfilled.

Basant Panchami, }
January 30, 1944. }

NOTE ON transliteration

KEY TO PRONUNCIATION OF ROMAN TRANSLITERATIONS OF HINDI, SANSKRIT, PALI, URDU, PERSIAN, AND ARABIC WORDS.

To avoid confusion from the use of too many diacritical marks, the finer distinctions in pronunciation have not been represented. The system adopted is as follows:

Letters and Symbols	Devanagari Equivalents	Pronounced more or less like
Vowels		
a	अ	e in err. i & u fir, fun, sun.
ā	आ	a art, far.
ai	ऐ	sounds of a and i combined into one.
au	औ	" a " u (midway between the sounds of aw and ow in dawn and down).
ē	ए	ai in fall
e	ए	ē but short.
i	इ	i in fill, mill.
ī	ई	ee , feel.
o	ओ	o , go, so.
u	उ	u , full, pull.
ū	ऊ	oo , fool, pool.
'	ऽ	Stands for elided a.

Letters and Symbols	Devanagari Equivalents	Pronounced more or less like
Consonants		
b	ब	b in book.
bh	भ	bh „ abhor.
ch	च	ch „ church.
chh	छ	tchh „ fetch-him.
d	ड	d „ dead.
ḍ	ፌ	th „ this (<i>minus sibilance</i>).
dh	ढ	dh „ madhouse.
ḍh	ध	thh „ with-him.
f	फ	f „ father.
g	ग	g „ good.
gh	घ	gh „ Brimingham, bring him
gʰ	ग	<i>guttural of g.</i>
h	ह	h in he.
j	ज	j „ joke.
jh	झ	dgeb „ judge-him.
jṇ	ञ	jṇ or gy.
k	क	k in king.
kh	ख	ckh „ kick him.
kʰ	ख	ch „ <i>Scottish loch.</i>
l	ल	l „ love.
m	म	m „ mother.

Letters and Symbols	Devanagari Equiva- lents	Pronounced more or less like
n	न	n in no.
ṇ	ण	<i>represents nasal sound.</i>
ṅ	ङ	n but with a click sound.
p	प	p in put.
ph	फ	ph „ lip-homage.
q	क	<i>guttural of k (as in Quran, faqir).</i>
r	र	r in run.
ri	रि	ri „ spirit.
r	इ	<i>may be pronounced like r.</i>
rh	इ	<i>r plus an aspiration.</i>
s	स	s in soap.
sh	श ष	sh „ shut.
t	ट	t „ take.
t	त	<i>soft t in French.</i>
th	ठ	th in hit-him.
th	थ	th „ think (<i>minus sibilance</i>).
v	व	v „ very.
w	व	w „ work.
y	य	y „ yes.
z	ज	z „ zeal.

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BOOK ONE
RELIGION—ITS GENERAL ASPECT

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1. MAN AND GOD IN THE PRESENT CENTURY.

There is today a woeful drift away from religion. Religion and its principles have lost their importance in the eye of the public at large. The modern civilisation, so rich in the resources of science, is considered to be all-sufficing. So strongly and deeply has the present age become impregnated with materialistic view of life that it has to a great extent abandoned the belief in the spiritual faculties of high potentialities inherent in man. A constellation of the luminaries of science appeared on the canopy of world's heaven and illumined the hearts of people with scientific thoughts. The glamour of materialism in consequence gave rise in man to an unfortunate tendency to run down the very structure of religion. Religion was discarded as being unfit for baking man's bread and science was installed instead. But the precept of J. Mason, 'it will cost something to be religious: it will cost more to be not so', comes out to be only too true and this divorce has, indubitably, made man pay a very heavy premium.

Is not the modern civilisation crashing to confusion and disappearing into a devil's dance of ruin and devastation? Is not the modern civilisation freely exploiting the inventions and discoveries of science to depreciate the value of human life? And is not the modern civilisation tending towards unmitigated barbarism? The advocates of modern civilisation must face the reality stark-naked. They should not be cold and indifferent to the hard and stubborn facts, howsoever ugly and unpleasant they may be. Do not colossal waste, gruesome acts of cruelty and infidelity, mutual hatred and jealousy, partially expose this much-acclaimed modern civilisation? The thinking mind is terrified and baffled and even the scientist stands aghast at the wreckless destruction, and the aurorean glitter which erstwhile hung around his ambitions and aspirations seems to have vanished away into the thin air. He finds that the blessings of science are proving to be a curse to humanity. Hendrik Van Loon, therefore, rightly remarks: "I have come to have very profound and deep-rooted doubts whether science, as practised at present by the human race, will ever do anything to make the world better and a happier place to live in or will ever stop contributing to our general misery."

By recapitulating these facts, it is far from being the purpose of this treatise to underrate or condemn science or to make little of its vast

and valuable structure of magnificent achievements built after strenuous efforts and patient labour. The utility of scientific means and measures cannot in any sense be questioned. Only a biased mind will disparage the remarkable contribution science has made towards the welfare and well-being of humanity. It has given birth to useful discoveries and inventions. The elements which in their wild form used to prove dangerous and ruinous, have now been controlled to a great extent and harnessed into the service of mankind. In fact, science has a proper and useful place in life; only it cannot be maintained that that place is the highest. Its search after truth is, indeed, very commendable; but it cannot be denied that the comprehension of Ultimate Reality is beyond its scope. By reason of the very limitations of human intellect, science as evolved by it, is incapable of comprehending the Absolute Truth.

The modern science, it appears, has reached very near the end of its tether and yet its goal of Ultimate Reality, like the horizon at a distance, seems to recede farther and farther away with its every effort to reach it. Many modern physical theories consist in establishing mathematical relations between entities which can be logically defined, but which are quite unimaginable. The phenomena on a minute scale are covered by the Quantum Theory, while those on a large scale are dealt with by the Theory of Relativity.

According to the Quantum Theory, light, like matter, is atomic in nature. A photon, as an atom or quantum of light energy is called, is believed to be something which possesses the properties of a wave as well as the properties of a particle. A single quantum of light must be large enough to cover the whole lens or reflector of a telescope, which may be several feet in diameter, and small enough to enter into an atom whose diameter is only about one hundred millionth part of an inch. In some mysterious way the photon fulfills both these conditions. Similar vague and baffling ideas exist about the electron, the proton, the positron and the neutron, which are considered to be the fundamental and ultimate bricks of which matter is built. In fact, the very notion of matter has now become more and more abstract and science is not in a position to say anything about it except its mathematical specifications.

According to Einstein's relativistic ideas, which have received powerful experimental verification and which are now accepted by the majority of scientists, the universe in which we live, is a four dimensional continuum governed by Riemannian geometry. Eddington, by assuming a different geometry, has made a very successful attempt to further generalise Einstein's General Theory of Relativity. According to his theory, a piece of matter is nothing but a place where the continuum is curved in a certain way. The 'objective reality'

is the continuum with different kinds of curvature and when our minds react upon it, matter and its laws arise. Here again, to understand anything, we have to replace our old familiar concepts by a series of mathematical symbols and relationships: which may satisfy the dry demands of intellect, but which cannot satisfy our natural inquisitiveness to form a mental picture of what they represent. The scientist gives preference to these unfamiliar and brain-addling ideas over the old ones, because they go to simplify nature and, probably, explain it better.

It will thus appear that the present knowledge of science, even at its best, enables us to form but a very inadequate and indefinite concept of the majesty of existence, of the nature that comes within our ken, not to speak of the Ultimate Reality which transcends all material intellect.

The material science having failed to explain and solve the cosmic problems and riddles, the most illustrious and celebrated scientists like Einstein, Eddington, Oliver Lodge and J.B.S. Haldane have been led to think in terms of religious philosophy. They admit that the universe is not a 'soulless mechanism' nor is it the outcome of blind chance, but that there is an intelligent mind working behind the veil of matter.

To quote Einstein who declares:

"I believe in God.....who reveals Himself in the orderly harmony of the universe. I believe that Intelligence is manifested throughout all Nature. The basis of scientific work is the conviction that the world is an ordered and comprehensible entity and *not* a thing of Chance."

The same is echoed by Eddington who admits:

"Something Unknown is doing we don't know what—that is what our theory amounts to."

And again, "The old atheism is gone..... Religion belongs to the realm of Spirit and Mind, and cannot be shaken."

The above statements are further supported by Oliver Lodge and J.B.S. Haldane. They say:

"When we come to ultimate origins science is dumb; we are confronted with the problems of existence and if there is to be any solution of that it is to philosophy and religion we must look and not to science."

(Oliver Lodge)

"The Material world, which has been taken for a world of blind Mechanism, is in reality a Spiritual world seen very partially

and imperfectly. The *only real* world is the Spiritual world.....The truth is that, not Matter, not Force, not any physical thing, but Mind, Personality, is the central fact of the Universe.” (Haldane)

In fact, science and religion both are essential and must, therefore, function hand in hand. “Those who speak of the incompatibility of science and religion,” remarks Pope Pius XI, “either make science say that which it never said or make religion say that which it never taught.” Religion without science ends in airy-nothing or self-delusion and hyper-orthodoxy, and science without religion ends in sheer destruction of the value of life; for the sharpening of intellect without purity of heart is only polished barbarity and disguised cannibalism. Reverence must, therefore, be shown for both and an attempt should be made to cultivate genuine religious spirit side by side with the scientific.

People are, however, not wanting who demand that religion must stand before the bar of laboratory discipline to prove its *bona fides*. But the laboratory-scientists, who are still groping their way in the dark and who have themselves failed to determine the Absolute Truth, are in no way competent authorities to give the final word on the philosophy of religion. Reality is not to be realised by intellect. It is not to be comprehended by the cabinet of imagination, nor can it be fathomed

by the council chamber of reason. It can only be comprehended through spiritual experience. The principle of spiritual life is the principle of purity. Even the brightest blaze of intelligence cannot impart purity of heart. Purity means renunciation of egoism or selfishness, the monster evil of the world, while it is in purity and refinement alone that a man differs from a savage.

2. ONE TRUTH ONE PEOPLE.

Science and religion should, therefore, join hands in a cooperative and Divine Mission of heralding an era of 'equality and morality', of 'justice and righteousness' and of 'brotherhood of man and Fatherhood of God'. The dawn of such a blessed day, however, is yet far away and the rhythm of this music seems to belong to a distant date, for the present chaotic conditions preclude such a dream being realised in the near future. Pitiably is the condition of the world today. Look around you: flames of passion and jealousy, rancour and strife; staggering conflicts between labour and capital, touchables and untouchables, masses and classes! But this should not perturb or discourage the sensible and honest thinker. Reformation is always a matter of time. The old tastes and standards cannot be given up all at once. An allowance must be made for the prejudices and predilections which hold sway over the minds of the people.

The present terrible world-conflagration is to decide the fate of the secular civilisation of today and to prepare the ground for the spiritual civilisation of tomorrow, based on universal brotherhood. The 'brotherhood of man and Fatherhood of God'—the law of all laws and the principle of all principles—is the greatest, the most momentous and fundamental ideal to which all the branches of human knowledge converge. Under the arches of religion and the great vaults of the splendid temples of holy scriptures the music that 'brotherhood of man and Fatherhood of God shall one day prevail', ever reverberates. The present culture and civilisation is being recast into a symphony of the 'brotherhood of man and Fatherhood of God'. This is the Divine Mission and so shall it be carried out. The march of civilisation and the evolution of mankind is governed by this principle and all the world events and circumstances are only so many deals on the celestial chess-board to work for the best and the highest.

“One God, one law, one element.
And one far off Divine Event
To which the whole creation moves.”

3. PRELUDE TO REBUILDING.

Individuals and nations had become extremely selfish. They had begun to worship matter and mammon. People had ceased to take any

account of the law of 'equality and morality'. They cared a brass farthing for the principle of 'justice and righteousness'; for when wickedness and corruption are on the throne, the principles of morality and righteousness are shown the door. Selfishness stifles 'equality and morality' and sinks down 'justice and righteousness'. It is such a headstrong and formidable beast as would pay no heed to the rider's voice, nor would it feel the reins. "Selfishness is an offence against humanity and a sin against God." Humanity, therefore, needed a reminder in the form of some huge calamity and grave peril.

The laws of Mother Nature are both merciful and terrible. There is no 'weak grace' in them. The elements have no power of tolerance. In the economy of nature things are made to move violently and harshly to take their proper place. Every world-conflagration is to prepare people for a nobler culture, for purer morals, for a more enlightened civilisation, for an elevated and progressive stock of mind and, above all, for the 'brotherhood of man and Fatherhood of God'. It is for world union, world-federation, or commonwealth of the free, based on the principle of universal brotherhood.

The Mother Nature cannot tolerate that man, the paragon of all animals, having the potentiality of springing into spiritual glory, should pollute himself with the sin of respectable selfishness and be slaved to it for long. If men do not learn, they are made to learn

through bitter lessons. And if they are lukewarm and slow, they are tackled and disciplined through schools of severer tortures and torments.

Nature may look destructive but it knows no waste. Things merely assume new forms. Chemistry teaches us that in every chemical process the sum of the masses of the end products is always equal to the sum of the masses of the reacting substances. When a candle burns, the whole of it disappears, but nothing is lost or destroyed in the process. The hydrocarbons of the candle, combining with oxygen from air, form carbon dioxide and steam, both of which being colourless and odourless gases escape our notice. Even in such drastic changes as the transmutation of one element into another, where a real disappearance of matter is often observed, the law does hold good. Matter is no doubt annihilated, but it is transformed into energy, which manifests itself in one of its various forms, generally light.

The present conflict and the war convulsions, therefore, are not only not destructive, but they are positively creative and cannot but usher in a new era in the long run. Every event that takes place is imbued with all intelligence and is a part of the Divine Plan running through all times. Even in the huge mass of evil as it rolls and swells, there is some Force working, leading humanity to real emancipation from the knots and coils of mind

Religion should, therefore, be given the foremost importance. To quote Ruskin, "He who offers to God a second place, offers Him no place; anything that makes Religion a second object makes it no object."

A contaminated state of morals and corrupted conscience cannot ensure peace. Religion alone can civilise and purify the hearts of people. Individuals and nations should, therefore, divert their attention to religion—to religion pure and unalloyed—and mobilise all its forces and resources to realise the aim of introducing a new era of peace and harmony, and thus put an end, once for all, to this gloomy chapter in the world's history.

All efforts divorced from religion towards the solution of world's great economic and political problems, will never be of much avail and are bound to prove abortive. Pacts, treaties and agreements shall prove mere patch-works as they have done hitherto. Despite the fact that public and political memory is so short, it is not to be hoped that the people at large should have blotted out of their memory the loud professions, claims and assurances, forcefully and emphatically given to the effect that the first World War was a 'war to end all future wars'.

Admittedly, certain eminent personalities and moulders of world thought, whose honesty of purpose cannot be doubted, did formulate schemes and proposals to perpetuate peace in the world, but all their efforts have fizzled

out. The nations of the world were not prepared to cast away their selfishness. They violated the principles of 'morality and equality', 'justice and righteousness'. They made necessary another war, a more ghastly and terrible one, to arouse them to their sense of responsibility and force them to tread the path of righteousness.

God cannot be bluffed, nor can He be mocked. The nations must realise their utter folly in continuing the present rotten state of affairs and feel the dire need for world-union, world-federation, world-commonwealth or a state of the free. The supreme issue behind every world-conflagration is to expel the follies and defects of heart, and to organise the nations on the basis of 'brotherhood of man and Fatherhood of God'. The only natural and logical course for them is to unite, to live together and to work together, for the well-being of humanity. From spiritual point of view, they all belong to one family with God as their Father. Only this fact must be realised and translated into action in every walk of life. So long as individuals and nations do not surrender themselves to this ideal and cheerfully and willingly dedicate themselves to the attainment of the 'brotherhood of man and Fatherhood of God', they cannot hope to enjoy the fruits of peace and prosperity. This is possible only through the agency of religion. In its absence, there will be wars after wars—wars on a more gigantic and ghastly scale—till materialism is knocked out. The people and nations may now choose!

5. RELIGION AND UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD.

Some people, however, object that whatever else religion may be, most certainly it does not cultivate the spirit of brotherliness. They are of the opinion that religion is a mental alienation that encourages as heroic and heaven-worthy the slaughter of human race in the name of God. It feasts in riotous manners and streams of blood. It is merely fanaticism, intolerance, bigotry and dogmatism of the worst type that refuses to grant even the liberty of thought to others. Were it really something otherwise, there would have been no terrible scenes of religious wars and crusades in Palestine and at Karbala, no cross for Lord Christ, no assassination of the Sikh Guru Tegh Bahadur, no gibbet for Mansur, and no murder of Haqiqatrai, not to speak of countless skirmishes in India between Hindus and Muslims in the name of the Great God and His glory and under the inspiration and authority of religion. A bird's-eye view of the history of religion would reveal and prove that religious wars have been the most horrible, and religious persecutions the most merciless. In short, the history of religion is full of blood-curdling records of wholesale massacre and butchery of tens of thousands of innocent men, women and children.

The case of true religion, however, has been entirely misconceived by such people.

Religion, in fact, is not to blame for all these barbarous deeds and stupid fanaticism. Religious masters, saints, seers, sages and incarnations, have invariably preached brotherhood of man. They came to unify, harmonise and save the suffering humanity; but worldly and selfish people, blind and uncompromising zealots and fanatics, unscrupulously distorted and perverted their noble teachings and, to serve their vested interests, split up mankind into warring and vindictive sects and schools, mortifying the very spirit of religion. They misunderstood the gleaming truth that reflected in the holy words of their revered founders and tried to seal up hermetically the spirit of religion in their own sects. Thus, gross ignorance, blind superstition, orthodoxy, vested interests, intolerant prejudices, and fanaticism, under the camouflage of religion, wrought incalculable havoc and destruction on humanity.

Any amount of evidence from the scriptures of the extant great religions can be quoted in support of the view of brotherhood of man. Take the case of Hinduism which is the oldest religion of the world. In its well-known scriptures occur the following injunctions:—

“Repay not blow for blow,
nor curse for curse,
Nor by base trick the meanest craftiness;
But shower blessings in return for blows

And curses and mean craftiness all.”¹

(Rg-Veda I-41, 9)

“He who uniformly sees all beings in his self and his own self in all beings, does not feel repelled therefrom (i. e., from beings).”²

(Isavasyopanishad 6)

Gita is the most authoritative book on Hinduism. In it we read:

“He who regards impartially lovers, friends and foes, strangers, neutrals, foreigners and relatives, also the righteous and the un-righteous, he excelleth (VI, 9).”³

“One, who hates no one; who behaves in a friendly manner towards all created beings; similarly, who is kind, and from whom possessiveness and individuation have departed; to whom pain and happiness are alike; and who is forgiving, always contented, controlled, determined, and who has dedicated his mind and his reason to Me, such a devotee is beloved of Me (XII, 13-14).”⁴

1 Mā vo ghnantām mā shapantām praṭi-vochē dēvayanām;
sumnair-īd-va āvivāsē.

Chaṭurash-chiḍ ḍaḍamānād vi-bhīyād ā-ni-dhātoḥ;
na ḍur-ukṭāya sprhayēta.

2 Yas-tu sarvāni bhuṭāny-ātmany-ēv-ānu-pashyati,
Sarva-bhūṭeṣhu ch-ātmanam taṭo na vi-jugupsatē.

3 Suhṛnmitrāryudāsīnamadhyasthadvēshyabandhushu,
Sāḍhushvapi cha pāpēshu samabuddhirvishishyātē.

4 Advēśtā sarvabhūṭānām maitraḥ karuṇa ēva cha,
Nirmamo nirahankārah samadukkkhasukhaḥ kshamī.
Sanṭushtah saṭaṭam yogī yatātmā dṛdhanishchayah,
Mayyarpitamano buddhiryo madbhakṭah sa mē priyah.

Sahib Kabir, the great saint held in esteem by both Hindus and Muslims, says:

“Sayeth Kabir: he really is a holy man who feeleth the pain of others. He who realiseth not the pain of others, he, an atheist, is without a Guide.”¹

In Islam also, greatest emphasis has been laid on good-will and kindness to others. The following extract from an article by Dr. Md. Hafiz Syed speaks for itself:—

“The holy *Koran* teaches:

“To your parents show kindness, and to kindred, and orphans, and the poor, and the neighbour who is a stranger and the companion who is strange and the son of the road and what your right hand possesses (slaves). As for the orphan oppress him not; and as for the beggar, drive him not away.

“The saying of Mohammad:—

“No man is a true believer, unless he desireth for his brother that which he desireth for himself. He who is not affectionate to God’s creatures and to his own children, God will not be affectionate to him. Who is the most favoured of God? He from whom the greatest good cometh to His creatures. The best of men

¹ Kabirā soī pīra hai, jo jānē para pīra,
Jo para pīra nā jānai, so kāfira bēpīra.

is he from whom good accrueth to humanity. All God's creatures are his family; and he is most beloved of God who trieth to do most good to God's creatures. Feed the hungry and visit the sick, and free the captive if he be unjustly confined. Assist any person oppressed, whether he be Muslim or non-Muslim. God enjoins you to treat women well, for they are your mothers, daughters and aunts. Do you love your Creator? Love your fellowmen first.

“Says the *Koran*:

“O you who believe; let not one people or nation scoff or laugh at another people or nation, perchance they may be better (in the eyes of God, i.e., possess greater potentialities of doing good) than the scoffers.

“The Prophet of Islam said during his last pilgrimage:

“Remember you are all brothers. All men are equal in the eyes of God. And your homes, your lives and your properties are all sacred and in no case should you attack each other's life and property. Today I trample under my feet all distinctions of caste, colour and nationality. All men are sons of Adam and Adam was of dust.”

Bulle Shah, the renowned Muslim Sufi of the Panjab, says:

“Remove all duality and you will see that no one is wicked: Hindu and Turk are

but the same. Regard every one a holy man and none a thief, for God is working behind all beings." ¹

The Holy Bible inculcates:

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."

(St. Matthew V, 43-45)

"Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind (Deut. VI, 5). This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself (Lev. XIX, 18). On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." (St. Matthew XXII, 37-40)

"Be ye all like-minded, compassionate, loving as brethren, tender-hearted, humble-minded, not rendering evil for evil, or reviling for reviling, but contrariwise blessing Be of one mind, live in peace." (Corinthians)

1 Dui dūra karo koi sora nahīṇ,
Hindū Turka koi hora nahīṇ,
Saba Sāḍhu lakho koi chora nahīṇ,
Ghata ghata mēṇ āpa samāyā hai.

Dhammapada is as sacred to the Buddhists as Bhagavadgita to the Hindus. In it we read the following:

“Never in this world can hatred be stilled by hatred; it will be stilled only by non-hatred—this is the Law Eternal.”¹

(The Canto of Twin Verses, 5)

“Let us, then, free from hate, live happily among those who hate; among men filled with hatred, let us dwell free from hatred.”²

(The Canto of Happiness, 1)

Then take Zoroastrianism, the religion of the Parsees. The sacred book, Patet Pashemani has the passage:

“If I have committed any sin against the law of brotherhood in relation to my father, mother, sister, brother, mate or children; in relation to my leader, my next-of-kin and acquaintances; my co-citizens, partners, neighbours, my own townsmen, and my servants—then I repent and pray for pardon.”

Confucius, the Chinese religious philosopher and founder of Confucianism, writes:

“Seek to be in harmony with all your neighbours; live in amity with your brethren.”

(Shu King)

1 Na hi vēreṇa vērāni sammantīdha kuḍāchanam,
Avēreṇa cha sammantī ēsa dhammo sanantano.

2 Susukham vaṭṭa jīvāma vērinēsu avēriṇo,
Vērinēsu manussēsu viharāma avēriṇo.

Lao-tsze, the founder of Taoism in China, preaches:

“Pity the misfortunes of others; rejoice in the well-being of others; help those who are in want; save men in danger; rejoice at the success of others; and sympathise with their reverses, even as though you were in their place.”

(Tai-Shang-Kan-Ying-Pien)

In Jnanarnava, the sacred book of Jainism, occurs the following passage:

“Slaying, false speaking, theft, lust, greed to hold

Aught as one's own exclusive property—
To give up these, and wish well unto all,
This is the essence of all virtuous vows.”¹

Thus it becomes clear that the principle of ‘brotherhood of man and Fatherhood of God’ constitutes one of the fundamental doctrines of all the principal religions of the world. It cannot be that the revelations of religion made by one God through His successive messengers should be conflicting and dividing and should inspire the divines with the

1 Himsāyām, anṛtē, stēyē, maithunē cha, parigrahē,
Viratirvraṭam—ityukṭam sarvasaṭṭvānukampakaih.

crimes of the blackest dye, or encourage the lovers of religion to justify the institution of religious crusades, or attach to them any Divine Glory. Prophet Mohammed has thrown considerable light on this point:

“Nothing is said to thee
That was not said
To the apostles before thee.”¹
(Quran, Sura 41, Ruku 5)

“Those who deny God
And His apostles, and (those
Who) wish to separate
God from His apostles,
Saying: “We believe in some
But reject others”;
And (those who) wish
To take a course midway,—
They are in truth
(Equally) Unbelievers;
And we have prepared
For Unbelievers a humiliating
Punishment.
To those who believe
In God and His apostles
And make no distinction
Between any of the apostles,
We shall soon give
Their (due) rewards:
For God is Oft-forgiving.
Most Merciful.”¹

(Quran, Sura 4, Ruku 21)

1 (With acknowledgment to Mr. A. Yusuf Ali).

Similarly we read in the Upanishads:

“Cows are of many different colours, but milk of all is of one colour, white. So the proclaimers who proclaim the Truth use many varying forms to put it in, but yet the Truth enclosed in all is One.”¹

The above truth is substantiated by Lord Krishna and Jesus Christ. Krishna says:

“This imperishable yoga I expounded to Vivasvat; Vivasvat taught it to Manu; Manu to Ikshvaku. Thus by succession the royal sages obtained this.”²

(Bhagavadgita IV, 1-2)

And Jesus says:

“Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.”

(St. Math. V, 17)

What is dividing and bifurcating is no revelation. Under inspiration all the messengers and prophets of the Almighty God have, in one voice, prescribed only one remedy and one antidote, the ‘brotherhood of man and

1 Gavām anēkavarṇāṇām kṣhīrasyaśtyēkavarṇatā;
Kṣhīravaṭ pashyaṭē Jñānam, līngīnaś tu gavām yaṭhā.

2 Imam vivasvaṭē yogam proktavānaḥamavyayam,
Vivasvānmanavē prāha manurikṣhvākavē’braviṭ,
Ēvaḥ paramparāprāṭṭamimam rājarshayo viduḥ.

Fatherhood of God', for the afflicted and aggrieved humanity. Prophet Mohammed advises:

"Cling all to the strong rope of love Divine—
Love for each other, and of the one God—
And do not think of separation ever."¹

(Quran)

Truth is not subject to change. So are the realities of religion. They could be easily unearthed, deeply embedded in the religious scriptures of the world, with a worthy aspiration and sincerity of purpose. From the Goal—the Almighty Father, the Sovereign Author and the Supreme Director of the universe—issued forth the path termed as religion and in the Goal the path merges. 'Reality is one and harmonising': such is the statement of science and judgment of philosophy. The path, therefore, is neither oriental nor occidental. It is neither topographical nor territorial. It is neither shifting nor transient. Age and clime cannot forestall it, no sect or society, no person or people, no caste or creed can reserve its copyright. It is all-embracing, all-enclosing. It is immutable, undeviating and eternal. It appertains, in fact, to the race that never perishes, and those who belong to that race, do not care for the dragging fetters of sects,

¹ Wa ʔasēmu ba hubba Ilāhī jamīyan, wa lā ʔafarraqu.

schools, castes and creeds. It is connected with all the aspects of human life, moral and social, intellectual and educational, economic and political. Thus, Religion, being a universal and natural path, can be traversed by every one who is a real seeker after Truth.

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BOOK TWO
RELIGION—ITS PRACTICAL ASPECT

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1. NOT WITHOUT A LIVING GUIDE.

During the countless births man has been forming a league with the lower-self and has been responding to the trumpet calls of the lower-mind, so that it has now become impossible for him to break through the citadel of egoistic selfhood with his own efforts. Easier it is for a seeker to hurl a rooted mountain from its base than to traverse the spiritual journey successfully and gain freedom from the yoke of slavery of the lower-self without the help and guidance of the living Spiritual Master. It is, therefore, most essential that the seeker should seek the guidance of the living Master before he decides to embark upon the spiritual journey. The Spiritual Master alone, who is one with the Supreme Father, can help the devotee in combating the opposite forces which block his path.

Religion is not a spiritual alchemy that instantly transforms 'the basest metal into gold', 'the lowest into the highest', 'the savage into the sage', or 'the human into the Divine'. It is not a royal road to the Supreme Being, as one might think, or a bed of roses all the way. Nor does it guarantee to transport a seeker to a spiritual domain or to fling open

the gates of haven of peace and rest in the twinkling of an eye. The path is rough and rugged and beset with grave perils and hardships and it is only through the Grace of the living Spiritual Master that a seeker can realise his end. Upanishads, therefore, tenderly advise:

“Arise! Awake! Having attained to the Great Ones (the Knowers of Brahma) understand (the path). Sharp as a razor’s edge is that path, hard to cross and difficult to tread: so say the seers.”¹ (Kathopanishad III, 14)

And Sahjobai, the famous saint of India says:

“Without the Spiritual Master neither the path is traversed nor the Divine Knowledge attained. Sayeth Sahjo, without the Master all is dark, without him all is fraught with loss. Where an ant cannot creep and where a mustard seed cannot be lodged, in such a region did the Spiritual Master accommodate Sahjo.”²

1 Uṭṭishthaṭa jāgrata prāpya varānnibodhaṭa,
Kshurasya dhārā nishitā duratyayā
ḍurgam paṭhasatṭkavayo vadanti.

2 Guru bina māraga nā chalē, guru bina lahē na Jñāna,
Guru bina Sahajo dhunḍa hai, guru bina pūrī hāna.
Chyūntī jahāṇ na charha sakē, sarason nā thaharāi.
Sahajo kūṇ vā dēsha mēṇ saṭaguru ḍai basāi.

Similar ideas have been expressed by the great Sufis, Hafiz Shirazi and Hazrat Shams Tabrez in the following quotations:

“Never traverse the spiritual path without the company of the Guide (Spiritual Master). Fear the gloom and the grave danger of being led astray from the path.”¹ (Hafiz)

“Like the sweet-smelling rose, covered with thorns on all sides, the path of religion is beset with countless grave dangers.

“Nothing is better for a novice than to make a search for the Spiritual Master to lead the path.

“If he undertakes the enterprise without the guidance of the Master, he only hastens his own destruction.”²

(Shams Tabrez)

And in the Holy Bible this idea finds an echo in the following words:

1 Qaṭā iṣ marhalā bē hamrāhiē khīzar makun,
Zulmaṭasṭ baṭars az khaṭrē gumrāhī.

2 Khaṭar ḍar rāhe dīn bisyār bāshaḍ,
Gulē khushbūe pur az khār bāshaḍ;

Na bāshaḍ mubṭaḍī rā hēch bah zīn,
Ki pīrē rā bajoyaḍ rahbarē dīn;

Agar bē pīr kārē pēsh gīraḍ,
Halākaṭ rā za bahrē khēsh gīraḍ.

“Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”

(St. Matthew VII, 13-14)

The Spiritual Master plays the role of a pilot who steers clear the path of all the obstacles of the spiritual journey which the student has to encounter at every stage. Besides, a seeker must bear the fact in mind that the Spiritual Master is essential not for this life alone, but that his guidance and assistance are of paramount importance at that critical moment when his eyes are screwed up and the path beyond, in all its darkness, is beset with thorns, traps and pitfalls for entrapping him. Disastrous and dreadful delusions await every man in the realm beyond the grave and he alone can overcome them who has undergone the process of death during his life on this planet. The devotional practices prescribed by the Spiritual Master enable the devotee to detach himself from his body and mind and thus easily undergo the process of death.¹ This is why Prophet Mohammed very pithily advises: “Die before you die.”² This fact finds further

1 The subject has been dealt with at some length at a later stage in the book.

2 Mūṭū qabla an ṭamūṭū. (Hadis)

corroboration in the teachings of Saint Paltu and Sahib Kabir:

“People die their own death but no one knows how to die. Sayeth Paltu, he who dies while living, easily attains salvation.”¹

(Paltu)

“It is better to die than to live if one knows how to die. He who dies before death becomes immortal.”²

(Kabir)

Those people who underrate the importance of the living Spiritual Master and try to attain liberation from the bonds of mind and matter, may very well be compared to the sailors at sea in a storm, ‘who pull some at the bowsprit and some at the mainmast but who never touch the helm’. Such people only waste their time and energy in fruitless pursuits and multiply their woes and miseries. Greatest stress has been laid on the importance of the living Master in all the religions of the world. It will be interesting to quote some of them here for the benefit of seekers after Truth.

1 Maraṭē maraṭē saba marē, marai na jūnē koi,
Palatū jo jīṭē marai, sahaja parāin hoi.

2 Jīvana sē maranā bhalā, jo mari jānē koi,
Maranē pahilē jo marē, to ajarāmar hoi.

"He who has unbounded devotion to God, and whose devotion towards the Master is equal to his devotion to God, such a holy man alone shall be able to grasp the essence of these teachings."¹

(Svetasvataropaniṣad VI, 23)

"No one can cross the mighty ocean of the world without the aid of the Spiritual Master, even though he be as great as Brahma or the god Shiva."²

(Ramayana)

"How is it possible for you to get at a thing when you search for it at one place while it is lying at another. Sayeth Kabir: you will find it only when you take with you the Guide (the Spiritual Master). When the Guide was taken in company, he showed the Thing. The path which would have taken ten million lives to travel upon was thus traversed in an instant."³

(Kabir)

"Sayeth Nanaka: After churning the mighty waters of the body have I discovered the unparalleled truth that Guru (the living

1 Yasya dēvē parā bhaktiryathā dēvē taṭhā gurau,
Ṭasyaitē kaṭhiṭā hyarṭhāh prakāśhanṭē mahātmanah.

2 Guru bina bhau niḍhi ṭarai na koī.
Jo biranchi Shankara sama hoī.

3 Vastu kahin dhūṇdhē kahin, kehi biḍhi āvē hāṭha,
Kahen Kabira ṭaba pāiyē, jaba bhēḍī lijē sāṭha;
Bhēḍī liyā sāṭha kari, dīnī vastu lakhāi,
Kota janama kā panṭha ṭhā, paṭa mēṇ pahunṇhā jāi.

Spiritual Master) is God and God is Guru and there is no difference between them. The Spiritual Master who is *Parabrahma Parameshvara* (i.e., God) Himself, bestows salvation on all. Sayeth Nanaka: 'It is impossible to attain emancipation without Guru,' this is the essence I have realised."¹

(Shri Grantha Sahib, Holy Book of Sikhism)

"Seek the protection of the Spiritual Master as without him this path is simply clogged with hardships, dreads and dangers."²

"Whosoever wants to sit in the company of God, tell him to sit in the company of the Spiritual Master. An hour's company with the Spiritual Master is distinctly better than a hundred years' sincere worship."³

(Maulana Rumi)

The argument, therefore, that a seeker can worship at any place where God ever manifested Himself is not at all a valid one.

1 Samuṇḍa virola sarīra hama dēkhyā.

Ika vastu anūpa dikhāi.

Guru Goviṇḍa, Goviṇḍa Gurū hai.

Nānaka bhēḍa na bhāi.

Pārabrahma Paramēshvara Saṭaguru.

Sabhanā karata udhārā.

Kaha Nānaka Guru bina nahin ṭariyē.

Eha pūrana ṭaṭṭa vichārā.

2 Pīr rā biguzīn ki bē pīr īn safar.

Hasṭ bas pur āṣaṭo khauso khaṭar.

3 Har ki kḥāhiḍ hamnashīnī bā Kḥudā.

Go nashīn andar huzūrē auliyā.

Hamnashīnī sāṭṭē bā auliyā.

Behṭar az saḍ sālā ṭāṭ bē rayā.

It is hardly any use for the true seeker to turn his attention with reverence to the Divine Lights which once used to blaze in the holy places such as Muttra and Mecca, Kashi and Kaba, Gaya and Galilee, Nazareth and Jerusalem. "Religion," as Austin O'Malley remarks, "is a process of turning one's skull into a tabernacle, not of going upto Jerusalem once a year." The fact is that these places, howsoever holy they may be, cannot serve the purpose of a living Spiritual Master. How nicely Shams Tabrez has drawn a line of distinction between the circumambulation of the living Spiritual Master and that of the holy places. He says:

"Like the Hajis I also circumambulate, but around my Beloved (the Spiritual Master). Like the dogs, I am not disposed to walk around the dead."¹

And so does Saint Paltu say:

"Those who devoted themselves heart and soul to pilgrimages and fasts and worshipped water and stone, had ultimately to die in dire repentance. The Essence cannot be realised through egotism. Declareth Paltu, whatever is attained is attained through the company of the living Spiritual Master."²

1 Tāvāfē hājiyān dāram, bagirdē yār mī gardam,
Na ikhlāqē sagān dāram, ki bar murdār mī gardam.

2 Tīrāṭha brāṭa mēn phirē bahuṭa chiṭa lāi kē,
Jala pakhāna ko pūji muē pachhiṭāi kē,
Bastu na būjhī jāi apānē hāṭha mēn,
Arē hān rē Paltū jo kuchha milē so milē sanṭa kē saṭha mēn.

It is, however, unfortunate that the sectarians, both of the East and the West, seem to attach great importance to their own revered Teachers and quite misunderstand the holy commandments which once emanated from their holy lips such as, "Worship thou me," the holy utterance of Lord Krishna, and "No man cometh unto Father save through me," the holy pronouncement of Jesus Christ. These, and like emanations from holy beings, they misinterpret to justify their own modes of worship. The seeker should know that the Master, though born as a man, is beyond all human disabilities, and enjoys communion with the Supreme Father. Through him shines forth the unmanifested Glory, and through his holy lips emanates the 'Speechless Wisdom' of the Immutable. It was, therefore, not the human Krishna, the son of Deoki and Vasudeva, who spoke these words, but an impersonal Krishna, a Spiritual Impulse which once manifested Itself through His corporeal frame. Similarly it was not the Christ who was crucified, who called himself the medium of reaching the Supreme Father, but the Son of God. Since both Lord Krishna and Jesus Christ were the Masters of their times, they naturally preached their own worship, but the fact is that saints and seers, messengers and incarnations, after fulfilling their mission on this material planet, sever all their connections with this world and retire to the region from which they had

descended. This principle has been revealed in the Gospel of St. John. Jesus says:

“As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” (IX, 5).

Further on, this point has been made more clear:

“The people answered him, We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man?

Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light.” (XII, 34-36).

Similarly a close study of the Sacred Gita reveals that Lord Krishna, while laying great stress on His own worship, has, for the guidance of the serious aspirants, prescribed the guidance of the living Spiritual Master for the attainment of salvation. In the fourth discourse He says:

“Learn thou this by offering obeisance, by questioning and by service. The wise, the

seers of the Essence of things, will instruct thee in Wisdom (34).”¹

From times immemorial and throughout all ages, in dark hours of great spiritual stress, when the forces of materialism, discord and disharmony are harassing the people at large with might and main, tossing them here, there and everywhere in internecine wars, hostilities and rivalries, like pieces of cork on the unresting waves of an ocean of woes and miseries, does a Gifted Spirit make an advent on this globe of matter for mitigating the sufferings of humanity. And Gita bears it out:

“O Bharata! whenever righteousness declines and unrighteousness becomes powerful, then I come to birth.”² (IV, 7).

The World of Today, therefore, Must Not Be Without a Spiritual Master.

2. THE “SEARCH.”

As without the company and guidance of the living Spiritual Master the spiritual journey is fraught with grave dangers, it becomes a matter of paramount emergency that the seeker should make an earnest search for the living

* Taḍviddhi pranipātēna pariprashnēna sēvayā,
Updēkshyanṭi tē Jñānam Jñāninaśtaṭṭvaḍarshinaḥ.

* Yaḍā yaḍā hi ḍhṛmasya glānirbhavaṭi Bhāraṭa,
Abhyuṭṭhānamadḍharmasya taḍātmānam sṛjāmyaham.

Spiritual Master, before he decides to embark upon the path. (The lines on which a true seeker should conduct his search have been indicated in the Author's book "Searchlight" in a chapter of the same title). He must go to the central Sanctuary where the Spiritual Master interprets the Divine Will and the Speechless Wisdom in human language and imparts practical instruction in the realm of spirituality to enable the seeker to put the mind out of action and awaken the latent spiritual faculties to hear the Celestial Chorus which imparts vitality to the entire universe and is the mainstay of the whole creation. In fact, the seeker needs the celestial fire—Love Divine—which only bursts forth from the living Spiritual Master, to transform the flint—his lower-self—into the crystal-clear flint-glass.

Religion is not an article of blind faith and does not intrude and interrupt the free play of reason in the initial stages. The seeker should not, therefore, divorce reason, his valuable ally, during the course of his search. Clinging to the compass of reason, he should continue his search until the Master is pleased to reveal himself to him. The aspirant should place his doubts and difficulties before the Spiritual Master, as Lord Krishna and Sufis admonish,¹ and should

1 Tadviddhi pranipātēna pariprashnēna sēvayā. (Bhagavadgita)

Har che goī shakīe iṣṭāfsār go.

Bā sbahānshāhān ṭo maskīnwār go. (Sufi Writings)

expect that the solutions forthcoming satisfy his reason and intellect. Reason and intellect are to be discarded only at a stage when he has recognised the Master.

To recognise the Master, however, is not an easy job, for outwardly he acts and behaves like an ordinary human being. His Divine attributes are not easily discernible. It is, therefore, not at all unnatural that the very thought of surrendering to him should not appeal equally to all. To an intellectually arrogant and socially self-important person the idea that he should kneel down before another individual very much like himself and do his biddings, is positively repugnant. In fact, so long as the superiority of the Spiritual Master and the inferiority of the student are not brought home to the latter's mind, the latter cannot, in the very nature of things, put implicit faith in the former.

The purity of aspiration, and sincerity of purpose, however, pay a devotee a lot and if he is true to himself, he is able to recognise the Master without any difficulty and loss of time. The Master initiates him in the modes of devotional practices and opens before him the possibility of establishing harmony with himself. The best and the easiest means for the devotee to elevate himself is now to give himself up in love and devotion to his Teacher.

3. LOVE DIVINE.

Loving devotion is the easiest course through which the devotee can transcend his limitations. This carries him out of himself. He must, therefore, try to deepen, extend and enrich the communion with the Master. Every step towards him will kill his doubts, every thought and deed for him will carry him away from his mind, his bitterest foe. He will find, to his immense joy, that his efforts are attended by another parallel process and that the action is not all on his side, but that the Spiritual Master too is responding and strengthening the relationship of love.

When the relation of love with the Master is strengthened, the devotee finds himself spiritualised day by day. He begins to experience that his Master is a flower that gives out the sweet fragrance of Love Divine which fills the hearts of the real seekers. His presence gladdens his eyes and his accent creates a thrill in his heart. He begins to look upon him as a friend of his nights and days, a companion of all hours, a true guide and a real guardian. He then realises that of all the greatest blessings conferred on humanity, it is the most ennobling to enjoy the company of the living Master.

The devotee now tries to surrender himself entirely to the will of his Master so that the

light that shines forth in him may also kindle in his heart. He sets up on the voyage of Ultimate Reality with patience and resolution. His progress is through storms of trials and tribulations. The magical and purifying effect of trials and tribulations cannot be underestimated. The upheavals of the world ocean purify the devotee's heart and deliver him from the knots and ties of his mind to a very great extent. "As in nature, as in art," says Guthrie, "so in Grace: it is rough treatment that gives souls, as well as stones, their lustre. The more the diamond is cut the brighter it sparkles."

The mad and excited waves of grave terrors and perils hit him between wind and water and, from time to time, darken his guiding stars and sink down his heart in sadness and dejection. The light through the instrumentality of which he was making a satisfactory advancement, often fades away and he finds himself in strange and deep waters. But the Spiritual Master who remains by him spiritually all the while, extends his helping hand at such critical moments by imparting him his spirituality, and thus enhancing his vigour and strength enormously. He then stands on the surface of the ocean like a great breakwater, throwing back or turning aside the swelling tides of oppressions and sufferings and, ultimately, the infuriated waves having lost their ferocity and madness, recede in disappointment.

As the winds of desires lessen, he begins to feel illuminating poise and tranquility reflecting in his heart. Dimly the light flashes and the devotee with the swimming belt of Divine Love presses on amidst the terrors of an angry ocean, widening his vision to the utmost, and striving his best to break through the gloomy and throbbing tidal waves in the storm-tossed ocean. With the maturity of time and through the Grace of the Spiritual Master, he acquires a faint glimpse of the farther shore. He then bows down in gratitude at the Holy Feet of his Master, internally, for the unique Grace showered on him at the hour of great stress and peril.

The term worship has its own significance in the domain of religion. It generally implies the recitation of hymns and psalms, offering of prayers, and kneeling down in homage and service in temples, mosques, and synagogues, in chapels, churches and cathedrals. The performance of complicated customs, rituals and ceremonials, and paying lip-homage to deities in their respective places of worship, has absolutely no charm to such a devotee. To him the Bounteous Nature has reared in the forest shades numerous temples and mosques, synagogues and cathedrals, beautiful and majestic, full of wonderful inscriptions and designs, haunted ever more by sweet music of the leaves.

Love demands self-sacrifice. Self-sacrifice dismisses the ministry of evil and makes the heart of the devotee fit for the visits of his Beloved. Only he will be blessed with success, therefore, who is prepared to sacrifice himself. So says Sahib Kabir:

"This is the house of Love. It is not the house of your maternal aunt. You can gain access to it only when you are prepared to behead yourself." ¹

The serious aspirant fully realises: "He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life shall find it." The devotee, therefore, inspired by Love, sacrifices himself at the altar of the Lord of Love—his Spiritual Master—and even then does he tremble that he is doing too little. He is in full harmony with Bedam who says:

"My life is His, my heart is His, I am His, in fact, everything is His. What is there, therefore, that He will take, and what is there that I shall offer?" ²

He now begins to realise that Love Divine can perform miracles. To him Love is self-fulgent Divine Light, a power that paves and illumines the path which leads to the Destination. It is a great liberator and breaker-down of all barriers that stand between a devotee and the Master. Love is nature's glittering

1 Yeha to ghara hai prēma kā, khālā kū ghara nāhiṇ,
Sīsa utārē bhui dharē, ṭaba paithē ghara māhiṇ.

2 Jān unkī hai dīl unkā, ham unkē haiṇ sab unkā,
Voh lēngē to kyā lēngē, ham dēngē to kyā dēngē?

“Of these, the lower (knowledge) is the Rg-Veda, the Yajur Veda, the Sama Veda, the Atharva Veda, Phonetics, Rituals, Grammar, Etymology, Metrics and Astronomy. And the higher is that by which the Immutable is known.”¹ (Mundakopanishad I, 1,5)

“Enough of pilgrimages, vigils, vows,
Porings o’er books, and Yoga-practices,
Put by all sacrificial rituals,
Have done with philosophic arguments—
Give all thy heart, give all thy love to God;
So only from all fear wilt thou win free.”²

(Bhagavata-Mahatmya)

“Fling all thy pile of books into the fire;
And turn thyself heart and soul
towards thy Beloved.”³

(Shams Tabrez)

1 Ṭaṭrāpurā R̥gvēdo Yajurvēḍah Sām̐vēdo Ṭhr̥vavēḍah
Shikshā Kalpo Vyākaranam Nirukṭam

Chhandō Jyotishamiti.

Aṭha parā yayā ṭaḍlaksharamaḍhigamyate.

2 Alam Kalau vraṭaistīrṭhaiṛyogaiḥ śāstrairalam makhaiḥ .
Alam Jñānakathālāpairbhaktirēkaiva n ukṭidā.

3 Saḍ kiṭāb-o saḍ varaq ḍar nār kun.
Jān o ḍil rā jānibē ḍilḍār kun.

“God is not to be found in mosques or Kaba or Quran or books, or in the offering of prayers. Neither did I find God in pilgrimages; in vain did I travel all over. Sayeth Bulle Shah: when I found the Master, all desires were fulfilled.”¹ (Bulle Shah)

“Why do you go towards Kaba; for Kaba itself in all humility circumambulates the Sacred Hearts.”² (Khwaja Qutubuddin)

4. BLESSED ARE THE HUMBLE.

Despite the fact that the devotee has been able to attain sufficient degree of purification of heart, it will be futile on his part to expect that the battle could be won merely at the first victorious flourish of the trumpets. To break through the strong citadel of egoistic selfhood is a terrible and uphill task. The battle is, therefore, a weary and tough one and can only be won by patience and fortitude and through the help and guidance of the Master. The devotee will have to shut up his eyes and ears completely against the light and music of the world and eradicate his

1 Nā Khuḍā masīṭe labhaḍā, nā Khuḍā khānā kābē,
Nā Khuḍā Qurān kiṭēbān, nā Khuḍā namāzē,
Nā Khuḍā mēn ṭīraṭha ditthā, ēvēn paindē jhāngē,
Bulē Shāh jaḍa murshida mila gayā, tūtē sabba ṭagāḍē.

2 Che ravī jānibē Kābā ki zarūē ikhlās,
Ān baṭaufē dilē arbābe safā mī āyaḍ.

egoism most ruthlessly. The transitory and turbulent enjoyments of the world will have to be sold away for the heavenly state and the throne of the angels.

Again and again many pitched and thick battles have to be fought with his ghastly enemy, his subtler self. He will have to pass through its constant *blitz* ranging over months or even years. Mobilized against him shall he find the forces of mind in the form of subtler desires. The forces of his deadly enemy, although apparently seem to have exhausted yet, to his great bewilderment, he finds that they rise up again and begin to fight the good battle. Reverses and failures are inevitable and the devotee will be overtaken every now and then by storms of dejection and sadness. The feelings of darkness and pessimism shall invade him and he will lose his heart and sink down terrified and perplexed at the dissolute and serious phase of the battle. The prospects of victory appear to him far remote. This will enable him to form some idea of the stuff the mind is made of and the amount of dross in its composition. Even the slightest tinge of pride on his part or the faintest idea of self-sufficiency makes him unfit for the reception of Grace. So long as the devotee does not step out of the dark citadel of egoism into the sunny domain of self-surrender, he cannot hope to realise his end in view. And as soon

as he does so, the morning dawns, the darkness of the night flees away and he visualises the rising of the golden sun.

He will, at last, in all humility look towards his Master for Grace and guidance, praying:

“Grant me power to control this mind,
This subtler mind of mine, this egoism,
And put an end to all duality,
And gain the reign of One, as is desired.”

The saying that “Humility is the root of honour and lowliness the foundation of loftiness,” holds good in the realm of religion. “The meek, the pure in heart, the earnestly and intensely seeking alone,” says Christ, “can see God; not the flippant, the noisy the disputatious.” The damsel of Truth, as it were, is too bashful to reveal herself to the intellectually arrogant but she reveals herself ungrudgingly to those who drop on their knees before her in true humility. The only bridge that spans the sea of pessimism and dejection, therefore, is the noble bridge of humility.

The realisation by the devotee of his helplessness, operates the flow of the Master's Grace. Grace is the dawn of the day of heaven of peace and rest. It is the short cut to the glorious temple of Ultimate Reality. The Grace of the Master turns the tables as the Master blesses the devotee with the sword of

the Holy Name by the wielding of which he wipes out the numerous divisions of his ghastly enemy standing against him. The devotee now begins to sing with Qalandar:

“Bajuz ijzo nayāz āṇ jā,
 Na mī pursand chīzē rā.
 Ba faizē kḥāksārihā,
 Tavāṇ hal karḍ mushkilhā.”¹

To him the Master is not a mere man but a Dynamic Force or Divinity lodged in flesh that mitigates the burden of humanity secretly and floods with light and love the ‘germs of goodness’ in every soul. His company excels all the enjoyments and pleasures of this material world. He then never makes a mention of his Master without a reverential pause during his talk. Neither history nor age nor mankind nor the excellencies of nature offer him anything which can be compared with the beauty and majesty of his Beloved. The following lines of Amir Khusro fully express the sentiments of the devotee at this stage:

“O my Beloved ! Thy beatific face far surpasseth in beauty the statues of Azar. In vain do I try to describe Thy majesty, for Thy beauty far excelleth my description.

“Never did I behold a form more refulgent than Thy face. Neither the sun nor the moon, neither the fairy nor the nymph, match Thy beauty.

¹ Nothing except true humility is of any avail in the realm of spirit. It was through lowliness that I overcame all my difficulties.

“Travelled have I all over the universe, and tried have I the love of numerous incarnations of beauty; seen have I the best in beauty, but Thou art simply peerless.”¹

5. THE “HOWS” DESCRIBED.

Saints, seers and incarnations have invariably prescribed three spiritual practices *viz.* the ‘repetition of the Holy Name’, the ‘contemplation of the Holy Form’ and the ‘perception of the Spiritual Sound’, the modes of which are explained to the seeker at the time of his initiation.

The votaries of all religions while performing their devotional practices, try to invoke their deities by repeating one Name or the other. They either repeat the Name by turning the beads of their rosary or engage themselves in parrot-like repetition, while there are others who prefer to repeat the Name internally by the heart. All these methods of repeating the Name are useful in their own way, but the serious aspirant and ardent devotee would

1 Ai chehraē zēbāi to rashkē buṭānē āzarī,
Harchanḍ vasfaṭ mī kunam ḡar husn azān zēbāṭarī.

Hargiz nayāyaḍ ḡar nazar naqshē zarūyaṭ khūbṭar,
Shamsē naḡānam yā qamar, hurē naḡānam yā parī.

Āfāqrā ḡarḡidā am mehrē buṭān varzidā am,
Bisyār khūbān ḡidā am ammā to chizē ḡigarī.

not rest satisfied with these methods of repetition. He is sincerely convinced that constant movement of any part of his body, and thought currents in the mind, so far from contributing to the concentration of his attention, prove, on the contrary, a positive source of distraction. It is futile to try to make the flame steady in a place where wind is blowing. A man must withdraw to a chamber or region where the winds of mundane desires can in no way gain access; and this can only be achieved when the devotee is able to withdraw himself from his body and mind. Khwaja Fariduddin Attar has described the various methods of repeating the Holy Name. He has described the repetition by the tongue or by the heart as inferior types of repetition:

“Verily there are three ways of repeating the Holy Name, but in thy folly thou dost not care to recognise this distinction. The common class of people know no other way than to repeat the Name by the tongue; the special class repeat It by the heart: but the selected people perform their repetition by a secret method. He who does not repeat the Name is a great loser.”¹

1 Zikra bar seh vajah āmaḍ bēghilāf;
To na dāni īn sakhun rā az gizaf.

Ām rā na buvaḍ juz zikrī zabān;
Zikre khāsān bāshad az dīl bēgumān.

Zikre khāsulkhās zikrē sirr buvaḍ
Har ki zākir nēst o khāsar shuvaḍ.

Sahjobai in the following beautiful lines has hinted out the real mode of repeating the Holy Name:

“Repeat the Holy Name in such a way that the attention may remain concentrated without any effort. Do not use the tongue or the palate and keep your attention concentrated within.”¹

The repetition of the Holy Name by the spirit entity enables the student to hear the silver tones of spirit. There is no difference between the Name and the Form, and with the correct repetition of the Name, the Form must manifest Itself, as, in the words of Fuller, “Name is the kind of face whereby one is known.” Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti has stressed the significance of Name in the following excellent verses:

“If thou desirest to be one with God, devote thyself to repeating the Holy Name, and behold the company of God in the company of the Name. There is no difference between the Name and the Named. In the glory of the Name, behold thou the perfection of God.”²

1 Aisā sumirana kījiyē, sahaja rahai lau lāya,
Bina jibhyā bina ṭaluvai, anṭara suraṭa lagāi.

2 Visālē haq ṭalabī, ham nashīn namash bāsh,
Babīn visāle Khudā ḍar visāle nāme Khudā.
Miyāne ismo musammā chu farq nēṣṭ babīn,
Ṭo ḍar ṭajalliē ismā kamāle nāme Khudā,

As a man thinketh so shall he become.
This has been excellently put by an English poet:

“Whatsoever thou lovest,
That become thou must;
God, if thou love God,
Dust, if thou love dust.”

The Spiritual Master, who has merged himself in the Supreme Being, is the express image, the sole representative, of the Supreme Being on this earth. It is, therefore, a matter of supreme importance that the seeker uses his sense of imagination correctly and, instead of contemplating the form of man-made idols, contemplates the Form of the living Spiritual Master; as Sahjobai admonishes:

“There is none like the Spiritual Master throughout the triple world. By repeating his Name all sins are washed away and by contemplating his Form, man becomes one with God.”¹

By doing so, the devotee imbibes all the attributes of the Master and gains access to the Glorious Temple of his Beloved. This fact finds expression in the following couplets of Maulana Rum:

“The real contemplation is that which may open the path for the devotee. The path is that which leads to the presence of

1 Guru Samāna tihun loka mēn, aua na dīkhē koi,
Nāma liyē pāṭaka nasai, dhyāna kiye hari hoi.

the King. The King is he who is king for his own attributes, not he who may be so for his treasures of pearls and jewels."¹

The above idea finds similarity in the saying of Feltham: "Meditation is the soul's perspective glass, whereby, in her long removes, she discerneth God, as if He were nearer at hand."

By the performance of the first two spiritual practices, *viz.*, repetition of the Holy Name and the contemplation of the Holy Form, the devotee can achieve physical and mental stillness, the first gateway to spiritual unfoldment. The desire-prompted impulses of the lower-self are rooted out and the mind is put out of action, rendering it possible for the spirit to effect an entry into the higher spiritual regions and allowing Divine Light and Wisdom to blossom forth. The fountain of peace springs up within the devotee, which puts out all murmuring and repining.

These practices have to be performed diligently and regularly daily. Habit commands man's life. He must, therefore, cultivate the habit of performing these practices for a few moments, after intervals, even when he may be engaged in carrying out his worldly duties. This will enable him to

1 Fikra āṇ bāshaḍ ki bakushāyaḍ rahē,
 Rāh āṇ bāshaḍ ki pēsh āyaḍ Shahē;
 Shāh āṇ bāshaḍ ki az khaḍ shah buvaḍ,
 Nē ba makhāzanhā va gauhar shah shuvaḍ.

keep the slate of his heart clean and conscience unblemished. The urgency and the magical effect of this habit cannot be over-emphasised, if the subtler desires and propensities of the mind are to be eradicated. He will undergo a change in his consciousness and the consciousness will be raised step by step, as Prophet Mohammed declares:

“O man! thou hast to go back unto God, Thy God, thy Self, with labour and with pain Ascending stage by stage, plane after plane.”

In the fullness of time the devotee will experience that the body and the intelligence are not the be-all and the end-all, but that the spirit is the ruler and sovereign of both, and a fountain-head of real peace, perfect intelligence and absolute happiness. His heart is now the palace of his Beloved, the temple of the Almighty, the paradise of peace and happiness. He then realises what priceless boon true religion can confer on man and what the real and sublime meaning of the word ‘Religion’ is. To him religion is *eternal peace*.

Mental quiet and the sacred waters of inner wisdom enable him to make the finest possible start for a working day, as it comes to him with love full of bloom and freshness. The devotee puts himself into proper communion with the Supreme Father and in tune with the universe. This inner harmony gleams

He then realises practically, that every creature on this earth is on the road to progress, and there is One Who does not allow anything to happen which may prove injurious to the spiritual interests of his children. To him it is no use exercising any force or compulsion in matters of religion. The following commandment of the Holy Quran truly translates his plane of thought and action:

“There must be no compulsion exercised in matters of religion.....Unto you your faith be welcome; so my faith to me..... Let those who know not God be led to Him, by those who know, with words of gentleness and wholesome and wise counsel, in kind ways.”¹

The ties which bind him to the flesh, begin to loosen, and he becomes fit to soar up into spiritual worlds. In the fullness of time the devotee, forgetful of everything else, dives into a region where there is peace, harmony and happiness. His whole being becomes surcharged with the bliss of spiritual experiences of a high order and a state of more or less withdrawal becomes part of his habit. He acquires the knack of withdrawing within himself at his will, even whilst his head and hands are busy with the duties appertaining to this world.

1 Lā ikrāha fiḍḍīni (Sura II, 34)..... Lakum
dīnu-kum walē yaḍīm....Uḍu elā sabīlī
Rabbekā bilhikmatē wal mauazzaṭil hasanaṭē.

There is in the constitution of man a definite spiritual sense organ for the perception of the Spiritual Voice. Ignore this, leave it undeveloped, and you miss the Celestial Chorus which welcomes you to the heaven of peace and rest. Awaken it, and you hear the Celestial Music. The practices of the repetition of the Name and the contemplation of the Form are designed to develop the power of concentration, awaken the spiritual faculty and make the spirit-entity fit for ascension into the higher spiritual regions by forming a contact with the Spiritual Sound. The Spiritual Sound, which has evolved the creation, has within it the potentiality of withdrawing the spirit-entities, like the twofold action of the magnetic force, to the regions of spirituality.

The passivity of the mind produced by the performance of the practices, is a necessary preliminary to spirit elevation. The paramount importance of the perception of the Spiritual Sound is, to liberate completely the spirit from the knots and coils of body and mind, and from the fetters which have tied it down within the prison of separate individuality; and to enable it to make a final leap to the region of everlasting peace and happiness.

The moment the Spiritual Sound, the Harmonious Music, an Echo of the Spiritual World, a Note of the Divine Concord, becomes distinctly audible, the thoughts spontaneously become fewer and fewer, the breaths lighter and

smoother, and ultimately the mind is completely silenced. A blissful state of real peace and serene tranquility begins to supervene and the material intellect is paralysed and consigned to the grave for good. The incubus of worldly desires disappears, the dread of woes and miseries is gone, the dreams of imaginary fears fade out, and light and wisdom blossom forth in his heart. Music begins to reverberate through the halls and galleries of his heart and spirit. The ties and coils of his secular activities completely loosen, and the aroma of evergreen peace clings round his whole being. As the devotee climbs up the ladder of spirituality and gains access into the higher spiritual regions, the inherent attributes of the spirit-entity manifest more and more, and at each stage his freedom increases, until he reaches the Unreachable, where all desires are burnt like a moth by the first touch with a flame. It will be only then that he will realise the supreme importance of human life, and the supremacy of self-realisation.

Such a devotee, who has crossed the black wide gulf of death, joyously watches the slow hours pass by, and is ever ready to throw off his mortal coil and welcome the delightful death when it comes of its own sweet accord to take him to the kingdom of supreme peace and happiness. The idea of death is superlatively grand and comforting to him, as the process of death will enable him to witness

the delightful and glorious morning of everlasting peace and eternal life; and he sings with Kabir:

‘Jā marnē sē jaga darē,
Mērē mana ānanda,,
Kaba marihaṇ kaba pāihaṇ,
Pūrana parmanāṇḍa!’^{*1}

He thanks his Saviour, the Spiritual Master, who has been gracious to conduct him through the process of death, a process which is so dreadful to an ordinary man.

His entire outlook is changed and the mystery of the Divine Plan is automatically revealed to him. This is the consciousness in which the stars talk and the sky stoops down to amuse him. The whole nature, in fact, appears to sing and dance before him. The petals of flowers and the tips of leaves, the fairies of air and the lillies of the field, appear to him singing songs of love and praise of his Beloved. The glimmering light of the glow-worms and the splendour of the beam, the stretch of the deep blue sky and the clustering of the stars, the grandeur of the hills and the freshness of the streams, bring to him a message from the Divine.

* The process of death which the whole world fears, is most delightful to me. When will come that blessed day when I shall die and attain to a state of perfect and highest bliss!

With the lapse of appropriate time, the aspirant devotee throwing away his flesh tenement, soars up like a bird released from the cage, and gains access into a region of perfect peace and happiness. As he flies up, there is something thrilling and exalting, for he finds himself marching towards his real abode, nearing to his Beloved's Palace, nearing to the Great White Throne, where Celestial Voices hymn to his soul: 'thou art immortal', 'thou art immortal'. It is a realm where the sun never sets; where the stars never disappear; where there are no tears of pain, no cries of death; where there are no groans, no moans; where there are no disappointments, no heart-breaks; where there are no sighs, no sobs; where there are no conflicts and no collisions; but where the everlasting sun shines forth most brilliant and beautiful; where the spirit-entities drink from the living streams of Love Divine that flow from God's High Throne; and where myriads of angels dance in real joy and merriment.

He tunes the radio of his inner intuition and hears the Divine Song, a Symphony of Spiritual Harmony, the Celestial Chorus. He keeps his apparatus attuned and at last captures the Voice of the Guardian Angel of all spirits. And when he succeeds in listening to that Divine Voice, he merges into the Supreme Being, his Beloved, the Eternal, the Immutable.

6. RENUNCIATION REAL.

The question may pertinently be asked whether man is called upon to introduce radical and austere changes of an ascetic character into the mode of his daily life when he decides to embark upon the spiritual path of this kind. Some people do seem to apprehend that some sort of severe self-discipline is expected of them. Some even tremble from the anticipatory dread of the difficulties they may have to face while traversing the spiritual path. The fact is that no radical change in the mode of life of a seeker is called for. The spade work has to be carried out within and the change in his mode of life comes as a matter of course. They must know that only in perfect silence and harmony can the spirit blossom forth and not by any forced and unnatural straining. The simile may very well be given of the natural blooming of a flower as against the forced opening of a bud.

True religion calls for the breaking of the hard incrustation of the lower-self by a progressive communion with the higher through the devotional practices prescribed by the living Spiritual Master. The spiritual practices have nothing to do with austerity and penance. The seeker is not asked to run away from the world arena into hermitages or jungles, nor would it be of any avail to do so, for his personal ego and harassing thoughts will also go with him wherever he flees to. "Within her own house,"

it is said of St. Catherine of Sive, "she found the desert, and a solitude in the midst of people." The battle of life must be fought and won, and not run away from. If religion has taught man to die, it has certainly, at the same time, taught him how to live. Of all the forms of government religion is the best as it teaches man how to govern himself.

Human life is broad enough to contain within it a definite path to salvation. Strict seclusion from the world, and retirement into mountain caves, jungles, and solitudes of deserts, and resortation to privations and penances, will not break the egoistic self nor open the flower of Divinity. Renunciation means better worldliness which can be practised by being in the world and not out of it. "Do not let water get into the boat, let the boat be in the water," is an excellent saying and finds support in M. Henry's remark: "It is more to the honour of a Christian by faith to overcome the world, than by monastical vows to retreat from it; more for the honour of Christ to serve him in the city, than to serve him in the cell." Guru Nanaka, the founder of Sikhism, has nicely thrown light on this subject in the following poetical piece:

Why searcheth Him in jungles, O my mind!
Invisible yet omnipresent, He is with thee always.
E'en as the scent within the flower dwells,
And as thy image in the glass is held,
So God within thine own heart ever bides;

Seek Him only there, O brother!
 Within and without, realise that He is,
 'Tis the Truth the Master hath revealed.
 Without the realisation of self, sayeth Nanak,
 From the world-mirage thou canst not be
 free."¹

There are also people who are labouring under the misapprehension and fear that one must renounce all sexual relations as something shameful, and lead a life of absolute celibacy. There is no sense in sexlessness. Marriage to a devotee is no bar, and religion gives sanctity to marriage. Marriage is a sacred institution, something far higher and nobler than a mere social contract. It is a channel through which spirit-entities take birth as human beings and are put on the road to salvation. The seeker can lead a house-holder's life of moderation and yet become super-conscious. This should not be understood to mean, however, that the devotee is at liberty to give free play to the passions of his mind. He has to stop, during practice, the activities of the mind and concentrate his attention at the spirit centre and

1 Kāhē rē manā! bana khojana jāi!

Sarabanivāsī saḍā alēkhā, ṭo sanga rahāṭa saḍāi.

Puhupa māhiṇ jasa bāsa basaṭu hai,

mukura māhiṇ jasa chhāyi,

Ṭaisē hī Hari basaṭa niraṇṭara, ghatahi mēṇ khojahu bhāi.

Bhīṭara bāhara Ēkahi jānau, yeha Guru Jṇāna baṭāi,

Kaha Nānaka, bina āpā chīnhē, mitai na bhrama kī kāi.

then listen to the Spiritual Song, which is the Divine Vitality and which resounds everywhere in the creation. This experience, once achieved, will provide him with a new outlook and unfold before him the Divine Plan. The price he has to pay to achieve this priceless boon is the dropping of the lower-self that identifies itself wholly with the body and the external world.

The interfusion of true religious spirit, therefore, will be the most effective course to humanise and harmonise the humanity at large, to crystalise and elevate the general standard of people's morals, to give a practical shape to the just precepts of international law, to transmit a pulse of sanctified sentiments through all the civil, social, economic and political affairs of life, and to make persons and nations high-principled and intrinsically self-sacrificing in their outlook. The educationists, the lovers of peace, and the benefactors of mankind, must, therefore, pool all their resources, and concentrate all their qualities of head and heart, to foster and disseminate the genuine religious spirit amongst masses. It becomes, at the same time, their chief concern to retrench all that is touch-me-notism and over-individualism, all that is externalism and communalism, all that is sectarianism and provincialism, which prohibits mankind to join the world-union or world-federation and which keeps people away from the 'brotherhood of man' and

Fatherhood of God'. It also becomes their foremost duty to discourage all superficial rituals and ceremonials, customs and superstitions with their supporters, who confine God Almighty within the narrow walls of bricks and stones and twist, pervert, and conceal the Truth of religion; and to condemn all that is vulgar and foul, all that is ungentlemanly and antihumanitarian, and all that is rowdy and barbarous in religious form and scope, outlook and practice; and thus bring about a golden reign of 'equality and morality', 'justice and righteousness', and 'brotherhood of man and Fatherhood of God'

A P P E N D I X

[BRIEF NOTES ON THE LIVES OF RELIGIOUS
PERSONALITIES REFERRED TO IN THE
TEXT OF THE BOOK]

MANSUR HALLAJ.

Husain Ibn Mansur Hallaj-ul-Israr, commonly known as Mansur, was born at Beza, a village of Iran. A scholar, as well as a Sufi. Author of several books. Travelled widely and became famous all over. He used to utter words which were annoying to the followers of *Shariat* (Islamic Code) and in consequence was turned out from about 50 towns. At last he came to Baghdad and began to wander about the streets exclaiming 'Anal Haq' (I am God). Under orders of the Khalifa of Baghdad, he was arrested and his body was cut into pieces in 920 A. D.

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KHWAJA FARIDUDDIN ATTAR.

Name Abutalib M o h a m m e d . Son of Abubakra Ibrahim. Born at Neishapur in 1157. Initially he was a druggist. One day a faqir happened to come to his shop and begged for alms, but Abutalib Mohammed showed indifference. The faqir addressing him said, 'Khwaja! How will your spirit quit your body?' "Just as yours," retorted Fariduddin. "Can you die like me?" asked the faqir. "Oh! yes", replied Fariduddin. At this answer the faqir lay prostrate on the ground and breathed his last. This incident proved a turning point in the life of Abutalib. He left the shop and became a recluse. He wrote several books, a number of which are still extant. It is said he was assassinated by Chungez Khan in 1230. His tomb is at Neishapur.

GHARIB NIWAZ
KHWAJA MOINUDDIN CHISHTI.

A Sufi held in very high reverence by the Muslims. Born at Sanjar in 1140. Son of Sayyad Ghayasuddin Hassan Sanjari. Received early education at Samarqand. Became disciple of Usman Haruni. Served him day and night for 20½ years. Toured and spent some time with Muhiuddin Abdul Qadir Jelani, Ghos Pak. Migrated to Lahore, Delhi, and finally settled down at Ajmer in 1165. Died in 1235. His tomb at Ajmer, which was completed in 1532, is now a place of pilgrimage where lacs of his followers assemble every year and recite poems in his praise.

QUTUBUL QUTTAB
KHWAJA QUTUBUDDIN
BAKHTYAR KAKI.

A well known Sufi of high order. Born in 1185. Received early education from Sultanul Ashiqen Qazi Hamiduddin Nagauri. An earnest disciple of Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti Gharib Niwaz. Spent his life in Delhi in great poverty. It is recorded that he threw off his mortal coil in 1236 as the result of the excitement caused by continued listening to the chanting of the couplet:

“Kushtagānē k̄hanjarē ṭaslīm rā,

Har zamān az ḡhaib jānē dīgarast.”

(Those who have mortified themselves
by the sword of resignation,
They receive new life every moment
from without).

SHAMS TABREZ.

A Sufi of the highest order. Son of Hazrat Allauddin. Received education at Tabrez. Disciple of Baba Kamaluddin. Travelled in many places as a merchant. So intense was his yearning to bless an earnest seeker after Truth that he had to resort to prayer for a disciple who could really benefit himself from his spirituality. Under Divine inspiration he proceeded to Rum where he met Maulvi Rum, who afterwards became his spiritual successor. He was beheaded by Allauddin Mohammed, the younger of the two sons of Maulvi Rum in 1246.

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MAULANA RUM.

Most prominent amongst the Sufis. Mohammed Jalaluddin, famous as Maulana Rum, was born at Balkh in 1207. Son of Shaikh Bahauddin. Received early education from his father and Sayyad Burhanuddin Muhaqqiq. Received higher education at Halb and Damishq. An orthodox Maulvi and an erudite scholar. Became disciple of Shams Tabrez at the age of 40. Diverted his whole attention to the service of his Spiritual Master and gave up his profession of a Maulvi. This change in him was intolerable to his disciples and admirers who could not reconcile as to how a learned scholar of the calibre of Maulvi Rum should become mad after a wandering mendicant—Shams Tabrez. All the spiritual attainments of Maulana Rum can safely be attributed to the Grace of Shams Tabrez. At one place he himself has written:

“Maulvī hargiz na shud Maulā-e Rūm,
Tā ghulāmē Shams Tabrēzī na shud.”

(Had the Scholar of Rum not become a slave to Shams Tabrez, he should never have become the Divine of Rum).

His most famous work is his 'Masnavi' which contains 26600 couplets and is held in the highest esteem by the Muslims. It is ranked as The Holy Quran in the Pahalvi (old name for Persian) language, as would appear from the following:

“Masnavī-ē Maulvī-ē Mānvī,
Haṣṭ Qurāṇ dar zabānē Pahalvī.”
(Jami.)

(The Masnavi of the great Maulvi,
Is the Quran itself in Pahalvi).

Died in 1273. His tomb is at Qonia where thousands of people go to pay their respects.

BUALI SHAH QALANDAR.

Name Sharfuddin, poetic title Sharf. A famous Sufi of Panipat in the Panjab. Preached in the mosque "Quwwat-e Islam" for 12 years. One day when he was sermoning as usual, a faqir entered the congregation and interrupted him saying, "O Sharfuddin! it is highly regrettable that you have completely forgotten your mission. How long will you remain occupied with these discourses?" This incident turned a new leaf in his life. He threw away all his books into a river near by and became a disciple of Shahabuddin Chishti, a spiritual descendent of Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti in the fourth generation. Served his Master for 12 years. He was highly respected by his contemporary Sufis. In his poems he has condemned *Shariat* (Islamic Code), Mullas and Maulvis and has preached the religion of Love Divine. Died in 1323 and was buried at Karnal. Subsequently his remains were removed to Panipat to his present tomb.

TUTIE HIND AMIR KHUSRO.

Born at Patiali in the district of Etah. Became disciple of Sultanul Mushaikh Nizamuddin Auliya at the age of 7. Worked as minister at the courts of several rulers. A talented poet of Persian and Hindi, and author of many books. A high class composer and musician. He was fired by extraordinary devotion for his Spiritual Master. One day Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya gave away his footware to a beggar. Khusro purchased the shoes for five lacs of rupees, and putting them on his head, proceeded to the residence of his Master. "A very cheap bargain!" exclaimed the Master, and thenceforth Khusro was a changed man. What he had purchased was not a pair of shoes, but the kingdom of heavens. When Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya departed, Khusro was in Bengal with Sultan Tughlak. He could not bear the loss and expired only 6 months after, in 1324.

HAFIZ SHIRAZI.

A Sufi and Persian poet of great repute. Name Shamsuddin Mohammed. Poetic title Hafiz. Early life rather obscure, but became very famous in later years. He received invitations from Khorasan, Turkistan, Mesopotamia and South India, but he remained in his native place, Shiraz. His book of poems, which is held in high esteem by the Muslims and for which he is so famous, is said to have been compiled from the manuscript found written on pieces of broken earthenware. Apart from expounding religion of a high order, his verses occupy the highest place in Persian literature. Died in 1390.

KABIR SAHIB.

One of the most illustrious of Indian saints. His parentage and date of birth are not definitely known. A saint by birth, but became disciple of Swami Ramanand. Preached the highest religion from his very childhood. He laid the greatest stress on the devotion of the living Spiritual Master. His teachings in the form of pithy verses (Sakhis) are full of enlightening ideas and elevating thoughts and are appreciated by the followers of all religions. He attained a ripe old age of over 100 years and threw away his mortal coil at Magahar (near Benares) in the district of Basti in 1518, where two separate mausoleums have been erected by his Hindu and Muslim disciples in the memory of their Master.

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GURU NANAK.

Most famous saint of the Panjab and founder of Sikhism. Born in 1469 at Talwandi, a village in the district of Lahore. Son of Kalu, a *Khatri* agriculturist. Received meagre education at school. A saint by birth. Travelled widely with his sole companion, servant and disciple, Mardana, preaching the gospel of Truth. Started on his first tour in 1499 and visited places in U. P., Bihar, Bengal, Orissa, Assam and Burma. Returned to his headquarters at Sultanpur after 11 years. In 1510 he started on his second tour of Marwar, Gaur Desh, Hyderabad Deccan, Madras and Ceylon. While at Sayyidpur, district Gujranwala he and Mardana along with others, were taken prisoners by the soldiers of the Moghul king Babar. He initiated the king of Ceylon and his discourses to the latter are recorded in his book, *Pran Sangali*. After, some rest at Sultanpur, he started on his third tour to Badri Narayan, Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan etc., and returned to his starting place by a mountaneous route. In his fourth tour from 1517 to 1526, he went to Sind, Mecca, Jiddah, Madina, Rum, Baghdad, Iran, Baluchistan, Qandhar, Kabul and reached Kartarpur *via* Kashmir. He settled down at Kartarpur and departed at the age of 70 in 1538. His poetical compositions are contained in *Shri Grantha Sahib*, the holy book of the Sikhs.

BHAKT SURDAS.

Born about the year 1484 in a *Saraswat Brahmin* family at Sihi, a village near Delhi. Went to Muttra at the age of 8 and there left his family and began to live with a *Sadhu*. From Muttra he went to Gaughat, a place between Muttra and Agra, and became a disciple of Swami Ballabhacharya Mahaprabhu. In the company of his Master he shifted to Shri Nathdwara and lived there till his demise at the age of about 80 in 1564. It is current that in his early life he fell in love with a woman, but some time after he realised his folly. Repentent, he blinded himself to shut out further allurements. A famous Hindi poet whose compositions are sung widely. Author of three books.

GURU TEGH BAHADUR.

Ninth Guru (religious head) of the Sikhs. Youngest son of Har Govind, the 6th Guru. Occupied the chair in 1664. Went on an extended missionary tour to Prayaga, Benares, Patna, Gaya etc. Lived for a long time at Patna where he founded a college for the instruction of the Sikhs and where he had a son, Govind Singh, who afterwards became the 10th Guru. From Patna he shifted to the Panjab and settled down at Anandpur. He was captured and Aurangzeb ordered that he be put into prison and tortured till he embraced Islam. Finally he was beheaded in the very act of reciting the Japji Sahib in 1675. The martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur was fully avenged by his son Guru Govind Singh Sahib.

HAQIQAT RAI.

A Hindu boy who was martyred for refusing to embrace Islam. It is said that a quarrel with his Muslim school-mates assumed a communal tinge and the authorities ordered that the boy be beheaded if he did not accept Islam. As Haqiqat Rai refused to give up Hinduism, the orders were carried out. It is said that when the news reached Shahjahan, the Moghul king of the time, he was very sorry at the incident and, under his orders, the Qazis and Mullas involved in the case were tactfully taken in a boat into a river and drowned.

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BULLE SHAH.

born at Rum about the year 1703. Caste *id.* Arrived in the Panjab at the age of 10. became a disciple of Shah Inayat. Took very pains to please his Master. A renowned whose Panjabi songs are still sung widely. He was condemned *Shariat* (Islamic Code), by the *Ulamas* and Maulvis and consequently had to suffer severe opposition from them. Died at *Surat*, district Lahore, in 1753, where he passed the greater portion of his life. His tomb at *Surat* is a place of pilgrimage.

SAHJO BAI.

No reliable record is available of her life, but her poetry indicates that she was a divine of a very high order. She belonged to a *Bania* family of Rajputana and she and her sister, Daya Bai were earnest disciples of Guru Charan Das Ji (1704 to 1782), a famous saint of Rajputana.

PALTU SAHIB.

Born in a *Bania* family at the village of Nagpur Jalalpur in the district of Fyzabad. A saint from birth. Disciple of Sadhu Gobind Sahib. Held religious congregations in the Village of Ayodhya (district Fyzabad). Lived in the days of Shah Alam, the Moghul king of India, and Nawab Shujaauddola, ruler of Oudh. His poetical writings are full of Love Divine and reveal his high position as a Saint.

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